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STATE FOR NEA/I-PM BILL JENSEN, CENTCOM FOR COALITION
COORDINATION CENTER CDR BRIAN KELLEY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL EAID IZ CA

SUBJECT: CANADA WILL NOT ATTEND FRIENDS OF IRAQ CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 50592

¶1. (SBU) The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, in response to reftel invitation to attend the Friends of Iraq Conference June 17-19, sent the following reply:

Begin text

Thank you very much for the invitation to the Friends of Iraq Conference in Abu Dhabi. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) will not be sending a senior representative to this conference.

Canada remains committed to working with Iraq's neighbors and the international community to help the Iraqi people rebuild their lives. A secure, stable, and democratic Iraq is essential for regional peace and prosperity. In this regard, international support and regional cooperation are vital components of the efforts to end violence in Iraq and to prevent the spread of instability in the region.

End Text

¶2. (SBU) Separately, the Department of National Defense also confirmed that it would not send a representative to the conference, under instruction from DFAIT.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Iraq remains a controversial issue for Canada, which prefers to focus more on its active military and humanitarian role in Afghanistan. Canada nonetheless remains a generous donor to Iraq's reconstruction and development, and will continue to provide this support for the foreseeable future.

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